

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

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R 220857Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7549

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT PGOV MY

SUBJ: MALAYSIA WARMS UP FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS

1. SUMMARY: ALL SIGNS POINT TO MALAYSIAN GENERAL ELECTIONS AUGUST 17 OR AUGUST 24 AT LATEST. POLITICAL PARTIES ASSOCIATED WITH GOVT'S NATIONAL FRONT ARE GENERALLY SATISFIED WITH DIVISION OF ELECTORAL SEATS. PM RAZAK TOLD POLITICAL PARTY MEETING THAT NATIONAL FRONT HAS SUPPLANTED ALLIANCE PARTY STRUCTURE. END SUMMARY.

2. ALL SIGNS POINT TO GENERAL ELECTIONS ON AUGUST 17, WITH AUGUST 24 MENTIONED AS LATEST POSSIBLE CONVENIENT TIME FOR BALLOTING. ALTHOUGH PM RAZAK'S CLOSE POLITICAL AIDES CONTINUE TO INSIST PRIVATELY AND PUBLICLY THAT RAZAK IS THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS THE TRUE DATE, SEVERAL GOM MINISTERS HAVE TOLD EMBOFFS IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAST FEW DAYS THAT AUGUST 17 IS CORRECT DATE FOR POLLS. PRE-

ELECTION SCENARIO WOULD BE AS FOLLOWS: LOWER HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT (DEWAN RAKYAT) APPROVES NEW BOUNDARIES OF THE 114 PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA JULY 25 OR 26; ON JULY 27 OR EARLY IN WEEK OF JULY 29, PM FORMALLY ASKS KING TO DISSOLVE PARLIAMENT AND WRIT FOR ELECTIONS IS ISSUED; NOMINATION DAY IS AUGUST 3 AND, ALLOWING FOR STATUTORY MINIMUM TWO WEEKS BEFORE POLLS, GENERAL ELECTIONS HELD AUGUST 17. AUGUST 24 IS POSSIBLE ALTERNATE DATE, COMING BEFORE CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL DAY AUGUST 31, START OF MONSOON RAINS ON EAST COAST IN EARLY SEPTEMBER, AND MUSLIM FASTING MONTH BEGINNING SEPT 17. IN THIS CASE, NOMINATION DAY WOULD BE AUGUST 10.

3. EXCEPT FOR A FEW LAST-MINUTE DECISIONS AS TO SELECTION OF CANDIDATES, NATIONAL FRONT HAS ALLOCATED SEATS FOR POLLS CONTEST. UMNO WILL RECEIVE LION'S SHARE WITH 56-58 SEATS, PMIP 14-15 SEATS, MCA 25 OR 26 SEATS, GERAKAN 6 OR 7 SEATS, PPP 4 SEATS, AND MIC 3 OR 4 SEATS. SABAH ALLIANCE PARTY (USNO AND SARAWAK CHINESE ASSOCIATION) WILL CONTEST ALL 16 SEATS THERE, PRESUMABLY WITH NO ORGANIZED OPPOSITION. COALITION GOVT (PESAKA-BUMIPUTRA AND SUPP) WILL CONTEST ALL 24 SEATS IN SARAWAK UNDER NATIONAL FRONT BANNER WITH SNAP IN OPPOSITION.

4. THUS FAR, OPPOSITION PARTIES (DAP, PEKEMAS, PARTI SOSIALIS RAKYAT) HAVE BEEN VAGUE AS TO NUMBER AND LOCATIONS OF CONSTITUENCIES THEY WILL CONTEST. WE EXPECT THAT OPPOSITION PARTIES WILL CONCENTRATE ON AREAS OF NATIONAL FRONT VULNERABILITY, E.G., DAP WILL CONCENTRATE ON PERAK STATE ASSEMBLY SEATS AND PENANG; PEKEMAS ON PENANG, SELANGOR AND FEDERAL TERRITORY AND PARTI RAKYAT ON KELANTAN AND TRENGGANU. A NEW PARTY--KITA OR KESATUAN INSAF TANAH AIR (NATIONAL JUSTICE UNITY PARTY)--HAS APPEARED AND A NUMBER OF INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES AS USUAL WILL APPEAR. HOWEVER, NEITHER KITA NOR THE INDEPENDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO PROSPER.

5. MALAYSIAN CHINESE ASSOCIATION (MCA) LEADERS HAVE EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH ALLOCATION OF 25 OR 26 SEATS, VAST IMPROVEMENT OVER 15 SEATS PARTY NOW HOLDS IN LOWER HOUSE, BUT LESS THAN 33 SEATS MCA "TRADITIONALLY" CONTESTED IN PREVIOUS ELECTIONS. MCA ACTING PRESIDENT DATUK LEE SAN CHOON TOLD EMBOFF JULY 26 THAT HE IS WELL SATISFIED WITH ALLOCATION OF SEATS AND EXPECTS MCA TO WIN MAJORITY OF SEATS IT WILL CONTEST, RELYING ON OVERALL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STRENGTH OF NATIONAL FRONT. IN RECENT WEEKS, JOCKEYING BETWEEN MCA AND GERAKAN PARTY OF DR. LIM CHONG EU, WHICH NOW INCLUDES MANY EX-MCA REFORMERS, HAS DIED DOWN; GERAKAN IS REPORTEDLY ALSO SATISFIED WITH NUMBER OF PARLIAMENTARY AND STATE ASSEMBLY SEATS ALLOCATED TO IT.

6. ADDRESSING MEETING OF MCA LEADERS JULY 21, PM RAZAK SAID ALLIANCE PARTY STRUCTURE "AUTOMATICALLY LAPSED" WITH FORMATION

OF NATIONAL FRONT WHICH WILL CONTEST ELECTIONS UNDER UNITED
SYMBOL OF SCALES OF JUSTICE. RAZAK ALSO ADVISED MCA TO SEEK
WORKING-CLASS VOTES AND TO COOPERATE CLOSELY WITH OTHER CHINESE-
BASED PARTIES IN NATIONAL FRONT, GERAKAN AND PPP.

7. NOTE: FUTURE TELEGRAMS IN MALAYSIAN GENERAL ELECTIONS
REPORTING SERIES WILL DEAL WITH RACIAL ISSUES AND COMMUNAL TEMPERA-
TURE, SIGNIFICANT ELECTION CONTESTS AND PROSPECTS FOR OPPOSITION
PARTIES, PRE-ELECTION ATMOSPHERICS, AND OF COURSE ELECTION RESULTS.
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